

West Lafayette Fire Department
January 2011

Promotion and Elevation in Rank

Tim Heath has been promoted from Sergeant to Lieutenant on A-Shift. Lieutenant Heath is a 21 year veteran who has been working towards this promotional goal for several years. Along with additional tasks, Lieutenant Heath passed his written exam and was a unanimous choice for this promotion among myself and the three shift command Assistant Chiefs.

Congratulations are also due Firefighter John Irr who has been elevated to the rank of Sergeant. Sergeant Irr was eager to accept the additional responsibilities of his new rank and has already started doing a fine job.

Both the Lieutenant and Sergeant openings arose as a result of the recent retirement of Lieutenant Don Callahan.

Weather

The accumulated snow and ice posed response challenges that were effectively overcome without exception by the responding crews. In some instances there was no noticeable increase in our response time for calls. The Street Department deserves thanks for the long hours and good job they did in clearing and maintaining the streets for not only emergency vehicles but all traffic as well. The on-duty fire crews kept the trucks from freezing up while out on calls and at stations 1 and 2 kept the drive clear round the clock. At those stations there is only two inches of clearance between the building and the fire trucks when they pull out of the doors. It does not take much snow or sleet accumulation on the drive to take away that clearance.

For whatever reason, both in West Lafayette and throughout the County, there were several calls for trouble breathing and seizures leading up to the winter storm and while the snow and sleet was falling. Once it stopped and people began getting back out we then began responding to several calls for injured people who slipped and fell. During the storm there were two calls for cooking fires both of which were quickly taken care of.

The Lindberg Bridge Automatic Aid plan was activated during the storm as a precaution. Fortunately aid from neither Wabash Fire nor Purdue Fire was needed but their cooperation and willingness to assist is appreciated.

U.S. 231 Relocation Training Houses

Three houses were available for live fire and additional training as a result of the U.S. 231 relocation. The necessary State permits were obtained and required structural preparations were underway but, unfortunately, the timeline for construction of the new road has prevented the houses from being utilized for training. This was a joint effort between WL Fire, Wabash Fire, and Purdue Fire that would have provided a rare live fire training opportunity. Even though January weather is problematic for outdoor training, missing out is disappointing.

Chief Drew